

A

Modest ENQUIRY  
INTO THE  
CONDUCT  
OF THE  
Court of ALDERMEN.  
IN WHICH  
The True REASONS that induced them  
to put a Stop to the BUILDING of  
*The Mansion - House,*

By their Negative Vote of the 7th of June last,  
In COMMON COUNCIL,  
Are respectfully sought for, but not found.

WITH SOME  
Short REFLEXIONS on the USE and ABUSE of  
the Negative Power in that Court.

To which is added,  
A Seasonable Caution to the Commoners of  
*L O N D O N ;*

To beware of too great a Growth of Power in the  
COURT of ALDERMEN.

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*By a CITIZEN of LONDON.*

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*Wisdom will not allow that which is many ways dan-  
gerous, and no way profitable. Lord BACON.*

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*L O N D O N :*

Printed for J. BRETT, against St. Clement's Church,  
in the Strand. MDCXXXVIII.

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Moby-DIQHIN

INTO THE

FOUNDAT

OF THE

CONFEDERATION

IN ADOPTION

OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

BY THE DELEGATES OF THE STATES

AT THE CONFEDERATE CONVENTION

AT MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA, ON MARCH

THE TWENTY-THREEDAYS OF MARCH, A.D. 1861.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, WE HAVE SIGNED

THESE PRESENTS, ON THE TWENTY-THREEDAYS OF

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## Modest Enquiry. &c.

WHEN a Body of Men, whose Character for Integrity and Wisdom is so fully established, as that of the Court of Aldermen of *London*, acts in an unusual Manner, or on any Occasion exerts a Power greater than common, it naturally stirs up the Curiosity of all Well-wishers, as well to that worthy Body in particular, as to the City in general; it begets in them a Desire of being informed of the Causes that produced so extraordinary an Effect; and creates an *Enquiry* into the Springs which gave Motion to so powerful a Machine.

The Citizens of *London* have doubtless a Right to be properly satisfied of the Expediency of all Steps their Magistrates may take, but more particularly of those of an extraordinary Nature; and whenever Persons concerned in such Measures either neglect or refuse to give their Fellow Citizens this reasonable Satisfaction, every Man is thereby left to his own Liberty to judge of such Proceedings in the best Manner he can, and assign such Causes

for them, as he thinks the most rational and probable.

An Event of a very uncommon Nature, has lately happened in this City ; it has drawn upon us the Eyes of all the Nation ; and, if not very rationally accounted for, will, I fear, expose us to the Contempt and Derision of all the sensible Part of Mankind. We have, it seems, for some Years past, thought it absolutely necessary, that a magnificent Structure should be erected, to be a Mansion-House for the Use of the Lord Mayors of *London*, suited to the Dignity of that great Magistrate, and agreeable to the Opulence of the most trading City of the World. In order to bring this truly laudable Design into Execution, several painful Steps have been taken, and many great Difficulties have been removed : When the Place of its Situation was at length, with much ado, fixed and resolved upon, we proceeded to lay heavy Fines upon the Living, and even disturbed the Bones of the Dead, in order to its Erection : In the next Place, we destroyed a very profitable Market, and, at the Expence of many Thousands of Pounds, we erected one in its Stead, which is not likely to prove of any great Benefit : After this, we pulled down Houses, dug Foundations, built a sumptuous Model, paid several famous and ingenious Architects, handsome nay very liberal Gratuities, for Designs, which we caused them to draw for the intended Building ; And, at length, solemnly compleated all, with obtaining the Sanction of an Act of Parliament, for confirming our Agreement with the Rector of St. *Mary Woolnoth*, the Expence of which was not small.

After the Expectation of all the Citizens had, in this deliberate Manner, been raised to the highest Pitch, and that they hoped to see the Fabrick rise according to the Model, which had for some Time been

been exhibited to their Inspection, and which had met with their general Approbation and Applause; Behold! all on a sudden, an entire Stop is put to the Progress of the Work, by the Majority of the Aldermen present at a late Common Council, to the Astonishment of all Mankind; And all this, because the Majority of the Commoners had given the Preference of the Masons Work to the Artificers whose Proposals were higher by the Sum of 225*l.* than some Proposals made at the same time by another Set of Artificers.

It was in vain for the Majority of the Commoners to affirm, they were led into this Decision (as they then solemnly declared, and still continue to declare) from a strong Opinion they have conceived, of the superior Abilities of the Persons whose Proposals they preferred: They were so far from obtaining that Share of Credit, which every Man, whose Character is unimpeached, has an absolute Right to, when he solemnly declares the Motive on which he has acted; that, on the contrary, their Decision was treated in a Manner too gross to be repeated; and the Aldermen thought themselves justified, in carrying their Disapprobation of this Step to the utmost Extremity, so far even as, by the Power of their negative Voice, to put an intire Stop to the Progres of the Building; nor duly considering, perhaps, the Consequences of so warm a Proceeding; nor reflecting, possibly, that the City must suffer, a great many times over, the Loss of the Sum in Question, I mean 225*l.* (admitting it were really lost) should the great Expences already incurred on account of the Mansion-House, be rendered quite useless, as they necessarily must, in case the Building should not proceed, which it cannot do, as long as the Negative sub-fists.

This is the Situation we at present stand in, with respect to the Mansion-House, and in which we are likely to continue, till the worthy Gentlemen, who put a Stop to the Building, shall be pleased to remove the Impediment; and, with a Candour becoming, I might say inseparable from, Men of Wisdom and Honour, retract the Step they have taken, if, on their cooler Reflexions, they shall find, that it can in nowise conduce to the Advantage, but must necessarily tend to the manifest Detriment of the City.

A modest Enquiry into this Point, is what is chiefly intended in these Papers; and I have till now purposely suspended doing it in this publick Manner, in hopes that the Aldermen themselves would, long ere this, have withdrawn their Negative, or at least have satisfied the Minds of their Fellow-Citizens, of the Solidity and Justice of those Reasons, which induced them to make use of their Plenitude of Power on this Occasion. I could very heartily wish, that by giving the Publick a reasonable Account of their Conduct in the Point before us, they had been so good as to spare me a Task I am not very equal to, and by no Means fond of; but as they have not thought fit so to do, I shall, with their Leave, proceed to examine this Matter, in the best Manner I can.

An Enquiry of this kind is the Birth-right of a free People, even in Affairs of a much higher Nature than that I am now about to treat of; and I am sure it would be injurious to the Aldermen in Question, to suppose, that it can give them Offence, to examine into the Reasons of their Conduct; for, admitting the Act of Power by them exerted upon this Occasion, were properly exerted (which, however, is a Point still undecided) yet I am fully persuaded they would chuse to have it considered as a Step by them taken for the Benefit and Advantage

of the City, rather than as a mere Ostentation of their absolute Power.

Since then the negative Aldermen have rather chose to submit this Step of theirs to the Examination of the Publick, than be at the Trouble of explaining it themselves ; I shall proceed to make a serious Enquiry into the Merits of this Affair ; and, altho' it cannot possibly be in my Power to say, what were the true Springs by which they were moved to proceed in the Manner they have done ; yet, if I can shew, that no one desirable End, no one View which a good Magistrate ought to have at Heart, could possibly be obtained by the Negative which they put on the Progress of the Building, I persuade myself, from the known Candour of the Gentlemen, that they will immediately retract an Error, which they have perhaps hastily fallen into, and withdraw a Negative which must then appear to be neither consistent with Reason, the Good of the Publick, nor their own Honour.

I should be very sorry to have my Intention, in what I am now writing, so far mistaken, as to have it supposed, I mean to charge the whole Body of Negative Aldermen without Exception, with any Views unworthy the Character of good Magistrates : Far be it from me ; I shall, on the contrary, at all times be ready to admit, that in general, they deserve the Character of very worthy Magistrates, as to the Rectitude of their Intentions ; but whereas to be mortal, and to be liable to Error, are ever inseparable ; and whereas, notwithstanding the valuable Qualities they possess, these worthy Aldermen are but Men, as we are, meer Flesh and Blood ; they may, perhaps, have run a little too precipitately into Measures, productive of no one good Effect, which a wise and prudent Magistrate ought to keep in view in all his Resolutions and Transactions of a publick Nature ; and this merely through

through human Frailty, without the least Impeachment of the Dignity of their Characters as Magistrates, *for this can only be impaired or lessened, by a wilful persisting in wrong Measures, and an obstinate Refusal to surrender to the Convictions of Reason and Truth*; but I flatter myself, no Person of this Character can be found in that worshipful Court, and upon this I fully rely, as to the Success I hope the following Papers may have.

Having once or twice mentioned the Views which a wise, prudent, and good Magistrate, ought to have in all the Resolutions he takes in his publick Character; I think it would be proper here to define, what these Views ought to be; and I believe, I speak the received Sense of all Mankind, when I say, that a good Magistrate will have no Views, but such as manifestly tend to the Peace, Honour, and Advantage of the Body, over which he presides, and that these he will faithfully pursue, with a strict Regard to Justice and Equity.

It is by this Scale I intend to measure the late Proceedings of the Negative Aldermen, and as I shall carefully avoid all personal Reflexions and scurrilous Insinuations of any Kind whatever, strictly confining myself to my Argument; so I hope, that what I have to offer, will have its just Weight: At least I will not fall into an Absurdity which has too often prevailed, and which is generally a Symptom of a weak Argument; I mean, that of exasperating those you would endeavour to convince, and administering *\* a lenitive Medicine in a corrosive Vehicle*: I also exhort any Gentleman who may have Inclination to write on this Subject, to do it in the same Manner; let him keep to his Point, and not part from his Temper, nor in Imi-

\* The Author forbids any Witling to charge him as talking like an Apothecary on Account of this Allusion.

tation of a late † Reverend Writer, drown the Strength of his Argument in an Ocean of Scurility ; this Sort of Conduct can only inflame Discontents, never can reconcile a Difference : I shall, therefore, in the Prosecution of my present Subject, carefully avoid falling into it.

That I may proceed with some Regularity, I shall consider the negative Vote, whereby the Aldermen have put an intire Stop to the Building the Mansion-House in the following Views :

1st. With regard to the Peace of the City.  
2dly. With respect to the Honour of the City.  
3dly. As it affects the Advantage or Profit of the City.

4thly. I shall enquire, Whether, all Things considered, Prudence did call for a Negative, or require that a full Stop should be put to the Building, on account of the Dispute concerning the 225*l.* and whether in Justice and Equity, the Preference which the Majority of the Commons gave to the highest Proposal, ought not to have been consider'd in a different Light by the negative Aldermen ?

5thly. I shall shew, that giving the extra Sum of 225*l.* in the Mason's Work, might possibly turn out to the Advantage of the City ; but that putting a Stop to the Building must unavoidably be a Detriment to it.

When I have gone through these Heads, which I will do with as much Brevity and Clearness as I can, I shall beg Leave to make some short Remarks on the negative Power vested in the Aldermen by the ACT 11 *Geor.* I. in which I shall endeavour to shew, that although it may in some Cases be properly and justly made use of ; yet if it be too frequently exerted, and carried to the utmost Ex-

† The Letter to my Lord M---r, by the Reverend Mr. G---n, Minister of the Gospel.

tent of what the Act at present seems to allow, it can end in nothing but the severest Oppression of the Commoners of *London*.

I shall conclude all with a brotherly Caution to my Fellow-Citizens, to look with watchful Eyes on the Increase of Power in the Court of Aldermen, as they tender the very Existence of the Court of Common Council; and if any amongst them have shewn their Approbation of the negative Vote of the Aldermen, in order to carry any particular Point, I shall admonish them to return to their right Minds, and, again treat the Negative as a *Monster*, which, as Common-council Men, they ought rather to endeavour to *whip out of the Court*, than preposterously cherish it in their Bosoms.

But before I begin the Task now set before me, I must beg Leave to set the worthy Aldermen themselves right, as to the Nature of the Question, in which they voted with so much Spirit; I hope they will not call this a presumptuous Attempt, since I have the strongest Reasons to believe, that the greatest Part of them really did mistake the Case, so far as to imagine they were voting in Favour of *Dun* and *Deval*'s Proposal as the cheapest, when in reality, they were inadvertently putting an entire Stop to the Progress of the Building: My Reason for supposing this, is the following one; I am undeniably assured, that one of the chief amongst them declared in a publick Company several Days afterwards, that he voted in the Manner he did, in order that *Dun* and *Deval*, the cheapest Proposers, should have the doing the Mason's Work; but being answered by a Person then present, that the Question in which he voted could not possibly relate to the Decision of which of the Proposals should be accepted; that Point having been before decided with the Solemnity of

a Division, in favour of *Horsenail, Townsend and Taylor's Proposal*; he replied with some Vehemence, that if the Question in which he voted, did not give the Preference to *Dun and Deval's Proposal*, he did not understand *English*. I beg now it may be considered whether the Question in which this worthy Alderman voted, could possibly have the Tendency he professes he had in view, or not; as I just now said, the Preference given to *Horsenail's Proposal*, was a Thing at that very Time absolutely determined, after long Debates on a Division; that Point was therefore quite foreign to the Question on which the Aldermen insisted their particular Opinion should be taken, and on which they put their Negative, which Question ran as near as I can recollect in these Words: *viz.* That it be referred to the Committee for building the Mansion-House to enter into a Contract with Mess. *Horsenail, Townsend, and Taylor*, for performing the Mason's Work for the Sum of 17200*l.* and take proper Security for their well Performing the same, according to their Proposal;" which in other Words amounted to this, Shall the Building go on or not? This Question could not therefore possibly relate to any undecided Preference at that Time subsisting between the two Proposals: Now, altho' I shall not dispute the Gentleman's understanding *English*, yet I think it is evident by his own account of the Affair, that he greatly mistook the Question then before him; in voting for which he was nevertheless remarkably warm and sanguine: And it is further very apparent, that this Gentleman was not the only negative Alderman, that understood the Question in the same manner, or pretended so to do, since in a List published immediately after the holding of this common Council, to which these Gentlemen gave a very strong Mark of their Approbation, and supported in a very

remarkable Manner; the Aldermen, who opposed this Negative, are said to have voted *against* Dun and Deval's *Proposal*, as on the other Hand, the Aldermen who by their Negative put a Stop to the Mansion House, are said, in all the Papers published on this Subject, to have voted *for* Dun and Deval's *Proposal*, as being the cheapest; this Mistake runs, I say, through all the Discourses made, and Papers printed on this Subject, and very remarkably in two Letters printed in the *Daily Advertiser* one on the 25th of *July*, and the other on the 10th of *August* last, to which I refer my Readers; and I shall not take any further Notice of these Letters, it being my Resolution to meddle with nothing of a scurrilous Nature, nor to follow a malicious Libeller, thro' his unmanly Suggestions, his dark injurious Insinuations,

Having, I think, pretty fully proved, that the Majority of the negative Aldermen did not understand the Nature of the Question in which they voted; let me now add, That the Aldermen who opposed the Negative, cannot with any Shew of Truth, Reason, or Justice, be said to have voted one Way or other, for either of the Proposals for the Mason's Work; the Merits of these Proposals, had already been fully debated and decided in favour of *Horsenail* and Company, notwithstanding they insisted on 225*l.* more than the Others; the Aldermen therefore, on the Question upon which they put their Negative, had nothing before them relating to the Elegibility of either of the Proposals; the Points included in that Question were these, and these only; That is to say,

1st. Whether the Question then on the Carpet was such an *Act*, *Order*, or *Ordinance* of Common Council, as could justly be construed by the *Act* of Parliament, to be subject to the Controul of the negative Voice of the Aldermen,

2dly. Whether

2dly. Whether it was Prudence to raise a Flame, or even cause the least Dissention or Misunderstanding between the Aldermen and Commoners of the City of *London* for the Sum of 225*l.*

3dly. Whether in case the Expences already incurred by the City on Account of the Mansion-House, should be rendered quite fruitless, by preventing the Progress of the Building, the City would not be prejudiced to a Value many Times greater than the Sum at that time in question.

4tly. And lastly, Whether the Honour and Dignity of the City, would not be exposed to the Derision of all Men of sober Understandings and good Sense, if a Scheme so solemnly entered into, and in prosecuting which such large Expences had been incurred, should be overset and laid aside on so trifling an Occasion.

These were the Considerations included in the Question, and which weighed with the Aldermen who opposed the Negative; they knew the Consequence of such a Vote, they were very sensible it must raise Animosities, in the City which could redound neither to her Honour or Advantage; they thought it was stretching their Power a great deal too far, to interfere so strongly with the Opinion of the Commoners, in an Affair of so small Consequence; and for these Reasons, which they hope their fellow Citizens must on *cooler Thoughts* approve of, they voted in the Manner they did, in which some of them have this additional Merit, that notwithstanding they were as desirous of having *Dun* and *Deval's* Proposal accepted, as the most active Gentleman in the Negative, they gave up that favourite Point of theirs, as they hope they shall always readily do any other, whensover the Peace, Honour, and Advantage of the City, or the Privileges of the Commoners are in any Manner concerned; and they hope they shall never betray so unwarrantable a Lust of Power (how

tempting soever it may appear to *some People*) as to grasp at it to the Prejudice of their fellow Citizens, either by overstraining an Act of Parliament, or by any other Means whatever.

To conclude this Head, If ever the Aldermen should by frequent Exertions of their negative Voice, attempt to diminish or annihilate the Power of the Commoners of *London*, they hope it will not be forgot, that they bore their early Testimony against so unjust an Incroachment ; they hope their Conduct on this Occasion will be remembered to their Honour ; at least they will always think it a great one, that the late Lord Mayor, who very seldom errs in Point of Judgment, came so entirely into their Way of thinking, as to desire his Vote might be added to theirs ; for which he could have no Inducement, but his real Approbation of their Reasoning ; since from the Nature of his Office, he was under no Kind of Necessity of declaring his Opinion, either one Way or the other. But to proceed :

I am, in the first Place, to consider the Negative of the 7th of *June*, as it affects the Peace of the City : And that this may have its full Force, let us remember that Peace and Unanimity are what give all the Weight this City can possibly pretend to have in any national Affairs ; a convincing Proof of which we had in the Overthrow of the late *Excise Scheme*, which glorious, as well as happy Event, had never signalized the 11th of *April*, had we not on that Occasion acted with the most perfect Union ; and if hereafter any Attempt of a like Nature, should be made on our Trade and Liberties, how unhappy would the Conjunction prove, should it come upon us at a Time, in which we might be divided with Heats and Animosities ; for whatever Cause our Divisions may originally arise from, whether they proceed from Things of Consequence or

Trifles,

Trifles, whether we quarrel about Religious, Civil, or Political Matters; or for a Stone, a Straw, or a Feather; an equal Advantage may be made of our Dissent; so that to disturb the Peace and the Unity of the Citizens, is to diminish the Weight and Consequence of the City, and so far deprive it of its very Being: How very cautious therefore should a prudent Magistrate be, of concurring in any Measures which are likely to affect the City in so important a Point! a Point on which so much depends, that it in a great measure determines whether the City of *London* shall be considered as a Body of some Consequence in the Nation, or as a contemptible, useleſs Load upon the Earth.

When any Government is so constituted that the smaller Body shall have a Right to controul the greater; whether it be a Kingdom or a Corporation, if the smaller Body shall on every slight Occasion be exerting that Power, the greater Body will always think themselves braved and insulted; and from hence great Dissentions will naturally arise, and the worst of Consequences may be apprehended; a Free People will ever be uneasy and think themselves aggrieved, when any Power is exerted, that has even the Air of being absolute; and Prudence may shew, that every thing that is lawful; is not proper to be done on every Occasion; it is a known Maxim, That the Extremity of Justice borders very near upon Oppression; it is therefore a very necessary Consideration, when an extraordinary Step is to be taken, whether although the Thing intended should strictly speaking be lawful, the Consequences of it may not be disagreeable; and whether the Body that think themselves injured thereby, may not imagine, that this indiscreet Exertion of Power on one Side, may entitle them to act in the same Manner; when this is the Case, Fury and Anger will undoubtedly take Place of sober and discreet Councils;

Councils ; and nothing but Rage and Confusion can be the Consequence of it.

The Aldermen, therefore, should consider their negative Vote, not as an offensive, but as a defensive Weapon, to be used only in some particular Cases of a high and uncommon Nature, and not wantonly to be unsheathed on every slight Occasion ; the Prudence of those who are to wield this *Flaming Sword*, should be adequate to the Danger that may attend the Use of it ; and, lest the greater Body should think themselves oppressed when controlled by the smaller, this Act of Power should not be exerted unless the Importance of the Affair in question should happen to require an uncommon Remedy.

This Power, if exerted in any other Manner, will naturally be considered by the Commons, as a Severity exercised upon them ; and it will be no Wonder if they resent it accordingly : They will certainly reflect, that they have also a negative Voice, as well as the Aldermen, and may be tempted, in answer to the Treatment they have received from them, to exert it in their Turns ; What an unhappy Situation would this City be in, if ever Resentments should run to this Height !

The negative Aldermen could not be insensible of the Discontent their Proceeding must naturally give the Commons ; they must also know, that this Discontent might produce a Flame, and a very dangerous one too ; which, that it has done, the Heats and the indecent Behaviour of some Persons, at a subsequent Common Council, too fully prove ; and are such Symptoms of a Fever, as must be Matter of the greatest Concern to such as have the Peace, Welfare, and Dignity of the City at Heart ; and altho' the prudent Behaviour of the Persons who were chiefly aimed at in this extraordinary Manner, has in a great measure damped the Resentment,

sentment, yet, as long as the Injury subsists, the Embars are only covered over, and will, on the first Puff, blaze out again, perhaps with greater Violence than at the first.

To sum up this Head: Since the Aldermen must be sensible, that their putting a Stop to the Mansion-House by their negative Voice, must necessarily cause a Dissention in the City, it is plain, they could not vote in the Manner they did, with any View of preserving the Peace of the City; they must therefore, doubtless, have had some other very important Point in View, for the Sake of obtaining which, they might perhaps think it worth while even to risque the Peace and Quiet of the City; they might possibly imagine the Honour of the City might be set in a strong and advantageous Light by this their Proceeding. I shall, therefore, in Pursuance of the Method I have laid down, proceed to examine their negative Vote, as it regards the Honour of this City.

And with Regard to this Point, the Honour of the City, I must own myself quite at a Loss to find out in what Manner the negative Aldermen could consult that, by putting a Stop to the Building; no Man can allow those worthy Aldermen that share of good Sense, and sound Judgment, which I admit them to be Masters of, and at the same time suppose they could imagine it would redound to the Honour of the City, to put a Stop to a Building, the Preparations for which had been so solemn as well as expensive, for the Sake of so trifling a Sum as 225*l.*----this can never be supposed or believed; much less is it probable the City should gain any Honour by giving People a Handle to say, that they levied such severe Fines on several of their Members, under a Pretence of building a Mansion for their Lord Mayors, but with a previous Design and Resolution of applying the Monies to other, perhaps

perhaps very different Uses ; and by the Bye, I never yet heard any plausible Reason given but the Necessity of having such a Building for the City's extorting such large Sums of Money from the Citizens in her present State of Affluence, very severely felt by many, and disagreeable to All : May it not be matter of Reproach to the City if a Belief should obtain, that notwithstanding the Money was raised under the plausible Pretence of doing Honour to the chief Magistrate, yet no such Thing was ever intended ? May not this Suspicion, already entertained by many, be generally believed by every body, if ever the Money should be applied to any other Use than that for which it was raised ? This certainly can never redound to the Honour of the City.

Is it not for the Honour of the City to be governed by steady Councils, such as may convince the World that no Steps are taken at random, without due and mature Deliberation ? and yet, how can the City avoid the Charge of a reproachful Levity, of an unjustifiable Rashness, if a Work undertaken with so much Deliberation and Solemnity, shall be laid aside upon so trivial a Pretence, as that which has caused the present Stop to it ? Will not the World be apt to conclude we had embarked lightly and without due Consideration in the Affair, and were glad of any Pretence to lay it aside ?

I have heard a worthy Alderman who gave his negative Voice on this Occasion, say he did it for the Honour of the City, alledging that the City was obliged in Honour, on all Occasions, to give every Job to the cheapest Proposer ; had I had the Honour of being acquainted with him, I could have told him that the Person who does the Work for the least Money is not always the cheapest Proposer, since the Goodness of the Work may easily overbalance

a small

a small Difference of Price; but as I propose to speak of this in another Place I will dismiss it here, and I shall only remark, that although the Alderman might be, nay doubtless was, fully persuaded, that the City ought in Honour to have given the Mason's Work to the Persons who proposed doing it for least Money; yet when the City had thought fit to do otherwife, for Reasons which they imagined sufficient ones, his putting a Stop to the Building on that account, was no kind of Remedy to the Evil he complained of, it could not alter the Decision of the Masons Work already carried in favour of *Horsenail's, &c.* Proposal; it had rather the Appearance of a Step angrily taken by him, because the Proposal he espoused was rejected: To conclude this Head; I sincerely declare, that altho' I have impartially considered this Step of the negative Aldermen in every Light, I can see it in none which is in any Manner advantageous to the Honour of the City.

If in the next Place we consider this negative Vote as it affects the Profit and Advantage of the City, I cannot find the least Colour to suppose the Aldermen concerned in that Vote had that once in their Thoughts; had they for a Moment taken the thing in this View, they must have been convinced, that although the Sum of 225*l.* in question had been absolutely thrown away, which is a disputable Point; yet this Loss could bear no kind of Proportion to the Loss the City must suffer, by rendering the great Expence already incurred in Preparations for building the Mansion House, use-  
less and of no Effect; the Disparity between the two Losses is so great, that it would be Time mispent to calculate it; yet great and heavy as it is, the City must submit to it; and even be at a further great Charge to fill up the *Duck-Pond* now made at *Stocks-Market*, in order to adapt that Ground to

any other Use, unless the worthy negative Aldermen shall at length shew some kind of Regard for the City's Loss, and take off the Embargo they have laid on her Proceedings: Till when I hope they will not over-rate their Merit in the prudent and frugal Management of the City's Money; since whoever is the Cause why Monies prudently laid out, do not answer the Intention with which they were disbursed, or deprives the City of all the Advantages of such Disbursements, really and in Effect throws that Money away.

I think what has been said on this Head, fully shews how much the City suffers in Point of Profit and Advantage, by the negative Vote, which is the Subject of our present *Enquiry*.

I come now to take a View of it in another Light, and to consider, whether Prudence, Justice, and Equity did really require that the Aldermen should put an intire Stop to the Building, because the Common Council had preferred the higher Proposal to the lower: I have already said, that the Goodness of some Work may be so much superior to that of another, as to render that intrinsically the cheapest which exceeds a small matter in Price; as this is a Truth which cannot be contested, I shall only infer from hence, that if the Majority of the Commoners were in their own Minds convinced that the Persons whose Proposal they prefer'd would do the Masons Work better than the others by more than the Difference of 225*l.* they were not only justifiable in voting as they did, but even in Conscience were obliged so to do; and from hence it follows, that the Majority of the Commons voted for the highest Proposal upon the same Principle as the Minority voted for the lowest: I mean the Interest and Advantage of the City; and this is so far from being a Paradox, that Justice and Equity oblige every Man to believe they did so, for since

all

all Men, who in Life bear an honest and unimpeached Character, have a Right to be believ'd, when they solemnly declare the Motives on which they have acted in any Affair; and as those of the Majority of the Common-Council with whom I have conversed, have in the most solemn Manner declared they gave their Votes for the highest of the two Proposals, purely from a thorough Conviction that the Work would be done better, by more than the Difference in Cost: They have, I say, a Right both in Justice and Equity to be believed; and surmizing they had any View of another Kind, is doing them a manifest Wrong. The utmost that could possibly be objected to their Proceedings, could amount to nothing more than an Error in point of Judgment; and sure no Man of Candour can allow, that any Person, on such an Account, can have deserved the injurious Reflexions and scurrilous Insinuations, given out as well in Print, as Discourse, against the Majority of the Common-Council, by the present Abettors of the Negative, who seem ridiculously fond of a Scourge, which may one Day gall their Sides.

I hope my Readers will be of Opinion with me, that in Justice and Equity this Resolution of the Commoners deserved to have had a more candid Construction put upon it by the negative Aldermen; those worthy Gentlemen had sufficiently declared their Disapprobation of the Step then taken; and if the Publick Money had thereby been misapplied and thrown away, as they contend it was, it is manifest, that no Part of the *Odium* could stick to them, it must all have fallen on the Commoners, if they could not in a clear Manner have justified their Conduct in the Eyes of Mankind; but, how unhappily does it fall out! These Gentlemen, thro' an Excess of Zeal for the Advantage and Profit of the City, and moved with the strongest Indignation

to see 225*l.* of her Money (as they pretend) lavished and thrown away have — What? Why to shew their utmost Abhorrence of so prodigal, so profuse a Proceeding, they have *prudently*, and *wisely*, thrown away a Sum twenty Times more considerable, by putting a Stop to the Mansion-House, and thereby rendering all the Expence incurred on that Account, quite useless, and a dead Loss to the City.

These are the happy Effects of that uncommon Zeal they have expressed on this Occasion; had it been tempered with their usual Prudence, they would have considered themselves as Trustees for the City, as well as Patrons and Advocates for *Dun* and *Deval*, and have rather suffer'd those Favourites of theirs to be deprived of the Benefit of the Work, how hard soever it might be upon them, than have put their Ward, the City, to a Loss so much more considerable than the Sum which constituted the Difference between the two Proposals.

This is the Light in which the great Economy and Frugality of the negative Aldermen stands, even supposing the 225*l.* in Question, had been really, as they pretend, quite thrown away; you see how much better it would have been for the City, had these her *tender Guardians* submitted to this Loss, rather than by a Zeal, which I believe, now does appear to have been none of the discreetest, have so greatly increased her Damage: But, how must their Conduct appear, if it shall be proved that this Sum was so far from being thrown away, that by giving it, the City had a Chance of receiving a Benefit; but that by the negative Vote which put a Stop to the Building, the City could receive nothing but Detriment, which is what in the next Place I have engaged myself to shew.

I believe

I believe the most fanguine Assertor of the negative Vote of the Aldermen, will hardly deny that a Difference, not only of one and a half *per Cent.* which is more than that in Question, but even that a Difference of twenty *per Cent.* may be found in the real Goodness of Masons Work, yet scarce discoverable to the Eye: This daily Experience shews; there is, therefore, no way of proving that the 225*l.* was thrown away, but by shewing it was not possible for *Horsenail and Comp.* to perform the Mason's Work in such a Manner as might deserve the Sum of 17200*l.* (which the Common Council had agreed to give them) equally as well, as *Dun and Comp.* might deserve the Sum of 16925*l.* for which they proposed to do it; if this be true, there is at least a Chance or Probability that *Horsenail and Comp.* may do the Work with the additional Encouragement of the 225*l.* in such a Manner as to be intrinsically better, by all, nay more than that Difference in Price; in saying this, I am far from intending to undervalue *Dun and Deval's* Work, for I am fully persuaded, that had the Common Council agreed with them at a higher Price than they proposed, they could and would have made their Work deserve it by an adequate Addition to it's Goodness; all I would deduce from this is, that the Common Council in the Extra Price of 225*l.* for the Mason's Work can't, nor ought to be, any more charged with throwing away that Sum of Money, than any private Person ought to be, who buys a Hat for a Guinea, and might have one for twenty Shillings, since 'tis very possible the Difference in Price is made up in the Goodness: From hence it appears that the Charge of throwing away 225*l.* is groundless, and the Fact so far from being proved, that unless you will suppose *Horsenail and Comp.* incapable of doing Justice, the City might have had their Masons Work done as much better

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by them, as the Encouragement in point of Price required ; and from the honest Characters those Artificers have always borne, this might reasonably have been expected from them ; so that the Amount of all this Clamour is, that the Commons had agreed to lay out 225*l.* for Masons-Work more than the Aldermen thought prudent they should lay out ; for 'tis impossible, in the Nature of the Thing, to prove, than the Extra Price would not have been accounted for with real Goodness of the Work ; if so, I say, the City had a Chance to have received an Advantage, at least a valuable Consideration for it, and then the Money is so far from being thrown away, that there is a reasonable Expectation it may be laid out very much to the City's Advantage, since 'tis a Truth all Persons concerned in Buildings will certainly experience, that Workmen cramped in Price will infallibly reimburse themselves largely, by performing their Work in a Manner proportionate thereunto.

Since then it plainly appears, that the 225*l.* so far from being thrown away as has been unjustly asserted, might in all Probability have been honestly deserved by the Artificers in the Goodness of their Work, and consequently laying out that Sum, have redounded to the Advantage of the City ; Who can defend the Step taken by the Aldermen ? For they, under a Pretence of preventing an *imaginary Loss* to the City, did put it to a *certain Loss*, the Amount of which consists of the Sum Total expended and disbursed in Preparations for the Building, as also of the Rents for that Purpose destroyed, which, not to appear inviduous, I here forbear to calculate, although at the same Time, I must assure my Readers I am ready, if called upon, to do it ; I shall only say at present, that were it done on the fairest and most moderate Calculation, it would afford them just Matter of Surprize and Astonishment.

Let

Let me now, before I proceed any further in the Task I have imposed on myself, look back, and, in a very few Words, sum up what I have endeavoured to prove; which I shall do by Way of Query and Answer. I hope in so doing to give no Offence, and I flatter myself the following Queries must readily be answered, as I have answered them.

1st. Did the Aldermen, by their negative Vote of the 7th of June last, consult the Peace and Quiet of the City? — Answer; No.

2dly. Did they thereby advance the Honour of the City? — No.

3dly. Did they, or could they, by that Vote procure any Kind of Profit or Advantage to the City? — No.

4thly. Did Prudence, Justice, or Equity, require that an absolute Stop should be put to the Building of the Mansion-House? — No.

5thly. Could they, by voting, as they did, recall a Point already determined in Common-Council, and give to *Dun* and *Deval* the Performance of the Masons Work at that time decided in favour of *Horsenail* and *Company's* Proposal? — No.

If none of the above-mentioned Effects could possibly be produced by their negative Vote, they are in the most serious Manner called upon, to declare, what Points they had in view by voting as they did.

I come now to take a View of the negative Voice vested by the Act 11 Geo. I. in the Aldermen; and I shall first consider it, as a Power delegated to them in order to put a final End to all Disputes between the Mayor, Aldermen, and Commons; for thus it is expressly declared in the Preamble of the Clause which enacts it; and secondly, I shall consider it in the Light it must necessarily appear in, should it be ever carried to the utmost Lengths the Act will admit of, and be exerted in frequent Instances

stances over all the Acts, Orders, and Ordonances of the Common Council, which are not expressly excepted in the Act.

The Clause which establishes the negative Voice begins with this Preamble, *viz.* "And to the Intent that a final End may be put to all Disputes between the Mayor, Aldermen, and the Commons of the Common-Council of the said City, touching the making or passing of Acts, Orders, or Ordonances in Common-Council; Be it Enacted, &c. From this Preamble it is plain, this Power was put into the Hands of the Aldermen, in order to put a final End to all Disputes; ought not this Power therefore to be used for the Purposes for which it was granted, and no other? If it is used on any Occasion where the Intent and End of granting it cannot be obtained, is not this an Abuse of the Power granted? May not this Power be used in some Cases, in which the Exercise of it must necessarily perpetuate a Dispute, instead of finally deciding it? Is not the present Case an Example in Point of what I now mention, and how can the present Dispute be ever decided, if the Negative be not retracted? Is it not a very severe Reflection upon the Wisdom of our Legislature, to imagine they could enact a Law for the final Determination of Disputes, which must in many Instances inevitably perpetuate those Disputes? Would not such a Law be a manifest Absurdity? I am humbly of Opinion, that if a Construction of an Act of Parliament can be found that is reasonable and natural, we ought to be contented with that, and not stretch it so far as to make it enact, what is in its own Nature absurd or ridiculous.

Whilst therefore we are waiting for the learned and solemn Decision of Council on this Case, let us make Use of the Lights of Common-Sense, and until we are better informed, suppose, that the

Negative

Negative granted to the Aldermen on the Acts, Orders, and Ordinances of the Common Council was designed to extend only to By-laws to be proposed in that Court, and not to any Oeconomical or Pragmatick Resolutions, relating to the Administration of the City's Affairs, or Things needful to be done for the Good of the City, the suspending or putting a full Stop to which must be detrimental, and leave the Affairs of the City in a worse Situation than they were in before; in such a Construction as this, the Clause now under our Consideration would no Doubt be effectual in finally deciding any Dispute, for in case any new Law were proposed, which, how beneficial soever, might have the Misfortune to displease the Majority of the Aldermen present, and they should put the Negative upon it, there would be an End of the Dispute; and the City would remain just as it was before such a Law was proposed; and if it received no Benefit from the intended new Law, it would at least remain in Possession of those Benefits it before enjoy'd: But give me Leave to observe, that the Case will be quite different when this Power is exerted on Acts, Orders, or Ordinances relating to any Thing which is necessary to be done, and which, if left undone, must redound to the Detriment and Loss of the City, and to the Prejudice of any of the Inhabitants; in such a Case as this, I shall always think it an Absurdity, to suppose the Act intended the Negative should take Place; for if it did, must we not agree that the Act of Parliament speaks in the following absurd and inconsistent Terms, *viz.*

“ And to the Intent that a final End may be put  
 “ to all Disputes, between the Mayor, Alder-  
 “ men, and Commons of the said City, touching  
 “ the Manner of doing any Thing agreed on all  
 “ Hands to be necessary to be done, Be it enacted  
 “ by the Authority aforesaid, That the Aldermen

" and Commons shall have a reciprocal Power by  
 " a Negative Voice, to hinder and prevent the  
 " Thing's being done at all ;" I hope the learned  
 Council to whom this Case shall be refered, will  
 take Care to vindicate the Act of Parliament from  
 talking in so absurd and inconsistent a Manner.

In order to illustrate a little further the Absurdity, that must attend the Supposition that the Negative was designed by the Act to extend to Things necessary to be done ; let us suppose that a Dispute had rose concerning the Preservation or Repair of a Building already erected, and not about the Elevation of a new one ; let us for Argument's Sake imagine the Monument by some Accident, was declin'd from it's Perpendicular, and in Danger of immediate Ruin, unless timely look'd after, that on this the Common-Council were assembed to receive from the proper Artificers Proposals for this necessary Repair, let us now suppose, that either the Aldermen or Commons should put a full Stop to the Proceedings in this Matter, by a Negative, either because the Person they espoused had not the doing of the Work, or for any other Reason, I ask, Whether in this Case the Exercise of the Negative would have the Effect the Act of Parliament intended it should have, viz. Would it put a final End to the Dispute ? No certainly, it would only put a final End to the Repair, the Dispute would subsist till the Monument might fall and bury a whole Precinct in it's Ruins.

If any one should object to this Parallel and say, though it might be necessary to keep up the Monument, it is not so to have a Mansion-House, for since we have been so many Ages without one, we may continue to be without one still ; to this I would answer, that although a Mansion-House is a Thing which might still have been dispensed with, had no Steps been taken in order to have one ; yet we

by our own Act and Deed, have made that necessary, which was before a Thing indifferent: Let any Man otherwise tell us, how he will account for the great Expences the City has been put to, the Hawock made, as well in her Cash as her Income, in order to the Erection of the Building; let us see how he will apologize for the Fines rais'd on many eminent Citizens for the same End, unless he urges the Necessity of having a Mansion-House: Will not the several Acts, Orders, and Ordonances, unanimously passed in Common-Council, prove, that the Legislative Power of the City thought it necessary to have such a Building? and in what a ridiculous Light must any Man place so wise a Body as the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Commons of the City of *London* in Common-Council assembled, if after all the Steps they have taken, all the Expence they have put the City to, if after they have agreed with the Workmen to do the Carpenter's, Mason's, and Bricklayer's Work, he should urge that a Mansion-House is not necessary.

We may, I think, in the next Place, fairly conclude, that the Negative was not designed by this Act to extend to Things necessary to be done, the Delay or Omission of which, must necessarily be detrimental to the Affairs of the City, if we consider, that the Clause which immediately follows that which enacts and establishes the Negative is a Clause of Exception, as to certain Points, which being of absolute Necessity to be done, are doubtless for that very Reason placed out of the Reach of the Negative Voice; these are, the Election of a Common Sergeant, a Town Clerk, Judges of the Sheriffes Court, Coroner, Common Cryer, Commissioners of the Sewers, Garbler, and the Governor and Assistants of the *Irish* Society; these are left to the Decision of the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Commons, in Common-Council assembled, or the

Majority of them, and were very probably all the Things of immediate Necessity, that occur'd at the time that Act was framed ; had more Cases of a like Nature occur'd, 'tis very probable the Clause of Exceptions had been more extensive, and perhaps the very Case now before us had been provided for, could it have enter'd into any body's Head, that so wise a Body as the Court of Common-Council of *London* could be so inconsistent with themselves, as by a Series of Acts, Orders, and Ordonances, declare a Thing to be necessary, order it to be done, incur large Expences in order to it's being put in Execution, and after all, stop short, on account of a Trifle too ridiculous to repeat.

I have already said, That this negative Voice of the Aldermen, should be considered by them rather as a *Defensive* than as an *Offensive Weapon* ; and I allow that under the proper Restrictions of Prudence, such a Power is not only reasonable, but even necessary for the Preservation of the Court of Aldermen ; but if, on one Hand, the Aldermen would be exposed to the greatest Hardships and Inconveniences were they deprived of this Power ; should they, on the other Hand, exert it in a despotical Manner, on every slight Occasion, it must become a grievous Oppression to the Commoners, and produce great Confusion in the City ; the few Examples we have in our Books of the Negative's being made Use of, shews how tenderly, and with what Caution, it has hitherto been thought prudent to handle it ; and the more I reflect how the Aldermen came to exert it on the present trifling Occasion, the more I am astonished : It looks to me as if a Design were on Foot to make the Practise more frequent ; if so, *Commons, look to yourselves !* or your very Being will be but of short Duration, or, which is as bad, of little or no Consequence.

It is certain the Aldermen ought to have a negative Voice ; but as certain they ought never to use it,

it, except in Cases of great Consequence : The Lord Mayor can, at his Pleasure, and by virtue of his Prerogative, stop all Proceedings in the Court of Common Council, by taking up the Sword and departing ; which, to him, is in lieu of a Negative.

I shall never think the Aldermen make a just or prudent Use of their negative Voice, unless in the following, or such like Cases, *viz.* should the Commons propose a Law, which should manifestly invade the Privileges of the Aldermen ; should they attempt any Act of a treasonable or seditious Nature ; any ill-timed or justly-offensive Address to the Throne ; should they endeavour to carry any Point, injurious to the civil or religious Rights of the Citizens ; should they insist on any Act, Order, or Ordinance, in itself repugnant to the Laws of the Land, or destructive of the Liberties or Properties of the Citizens : In these or such like Cases alone, can they exert their negative Voice, without the Imputation of despotic Power : But should they, as I said before, exert it on all Occasions which are not mentioned in the Clause of Exceptions, what a Situation would the Commons of *London* be in ! I will therefore just trace out the Condition we should be in, should the Aldermen extend this their Power as far as the Act, taken in its utmost Latitude, may seem to admit of.

The first Effect you would feel from so extensive a Use of the Negative, would be, to find yourselves controuled in the Choice of all Committees ; those of the City and Bridgehouse Lands might probably be attacked in the first Place. It is not yet forgotten, that in former Times the Aldermen had the whole and entire Management of the City's Revenues ; and who knows how far the Love of Power, &c. may make some wish to see those *Golden Days* restored.

As no Money can be disposed of by the Common Council, without an Act, Order, or Ordinance, the extensive Use of the Negative might, in the next Place, be levelled against that Part of your Right, as Members of the Court of Common Council; by this Step, the Aldermen would have it in their Breast, to dispose of large Sums of the City's Cash, whilst they might hinder you from issuing so small a Sum as Ten Pounds; if they should think fit so to do. Let no Man think this is a vain Suggestion: I can assure you, that not many Years since, an Attempt, strongly tending this Way, was so openly and vigorously pushed in the Council-Chamber, that had not four Aldermen, out of sixteen then in Court, withdrawn themselves, and by so doing dissolved that enterprizing Assembly, you might probably, long ere this, have felt the most disagreeable Effects of a Design declared to be legal by a learned Gentleman then present, and urged with much Vivacity by many worthy Members of that Court: But the honest Behaviour of those four Aldermen, put for that Time a Stop to the Attempt; and I have observed nothing like reviving it, till the negative Vote of the 7th of June last, gave me, I think, just Cause to apprehend, that the fatal Thirst of Power, of which I have given you now so manifest an Instance, is not entirely quenched.

I could proceed to enumerate many more Inconveniences and Misfortunes, which will be the inevitable Consequences of this negative Power, carried to its utmost Stretch; but what I have said may be sufficient to put you on your Guard, and I would by no means appear desirous of putting Things into the worst Light they are capable of.

Since then the negative Power of the Aldermen, carried to its utmost Extent, must undoubtedly be productive of the Evils I have hinted at; and since

It is equally manifest, that the Negative was granted in order to put an End to Disputes, and not in order to perpetuate them ; Consider, my Fellow-Citizens, whether you ought not to embrace the first proper Opportunity of applying to the Legislature, for such an Explanation of that Clause as may confine that Power within just and reasonable Bounds, in such a Manner as may secure the Commoners of *London*, from being in the Hands of the Aldermen, like Clay in those of a Potter, to be by them converted into Vessels of Honour, or Vessels of Dishonour, at their Will and Pleasure.

After what I have said, I need not, I believe, add much more, to engage my Fellow-Citizens to be cautious and watchful, lest the Power of the Aldermen, from the Indolence and Supineness of many, and the sinister Designs of a few, should receive an Increase, which will make it an Overmatch for that of the Commons, by which they will, in the End, be necessarily reduced to a Body of as little Weight and Consequence in the City, as the Con—c—n is in the C—h. Let us consider, that the Civil Government of the City of *London*, is a Miniature of the most perfect and most excellent of all Kinds of Government, I mean that of this Nation : Let us, therefore, study to preserve it, with that Care and Diligence, which so noble and valuable a Constitution deserves : Let us be jealous of our own Rights and Privileges as Commoners, without attempting to invade those of the Aldermen : But, above all things, let us look upon it as a Conduct deserving the greatest Reproach, meanly to approve, and abjectly to applaud, that Mark of Contempt, that injurious Superiority, the Negative of the Aldermen, when exercised by them on Occasions which do not require the Help or Application of so violent a Remedy : Let none of us, how justly soever we may

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think ourselves aggrieved or neglected, by Persons in the same Interest with ourselves, *meanly court the disjointed Fragments of a vanquished Party*, and by their Help endeavour to create Confusion, where we cannot hope for Victory : Let us reflect, that if we could gain a Victory by such Assistance as this, it would in Effect be a very great Misfortune to us, if we really retain the same Sentiments and Principles we have hitherto made a Profession of, and are not indeed changed and gone from them, as has been (I hope injuriously) suggested : Let us remember, that by acting in this Manner, we do but justify to the World, that if our Brethren have shewed us some Degree of Coldness or Disregard, they have not done it without just Grounds : Let us, in the last Place, reflect, that if by our Means and Behaviour, the broken Interest above hinted at, should again cement, revive, and gain the Ascendant, we, who ran into their Arms, not out of Love to them, but from Views of our own, must not expect any Share of their Esteem or Favour ; when their Turn is served, they will naturally shake us off ; of which, if we should be weak enough to complain, they may justly retort, that as we took them into our Councils, only because we wanted them, they turn us out of theirs, because they have no farther Occasion for our Assistance. This we may depend upon, that as these new Allies must fully know, that we turned Tail upon our Friends and Principles, upon Motives in which a Regard to them had no kind of Share, they will admit us into no kind of Share of their Confidence ; nay, were we to run into all their Measures, with ever so much Warmth and Zeal, we should still be looked upon by them as nothing but officious Renegadoes. What a wretched Figure shall we make in such a Situation as this !

In order to avoid making such a mortifying Appearance, if any of us have been unwarily drawn into any Measures, tending to overset the Interest we have hitherto espoused; let us open our Eyes, ere it be too late, and return to our forsaken Colours, ere the reproachful Marks of Desertion be too strong upon us; our Brethren will yet receive us with open Arms, and bury all that's past in friendly Oblivion: Let us think ourselves above administering to the *Vanity of any one Person*; nor let us, by supporting any low Schemes, render our selves fit Objects of the Scorn and Contempt of our old real Friends, as well as of the Neglect and Derision of our new pretended ones.

I have now gone through the Task I had at first set my self, in as short a Manner as I could. I am conscious of great Wants of Accuracy, as well in the Stile, as the Manner of it: It was no Part of my Intention, had I been capable to have done it, to work upon the Passions of my Readers: All I intended in these Papers was a *Modest Enquiry* into the Conduct of our negative Aldermen, directed to the common Sense and sound Understanding of my Fellow Citizens; and, at the same Time, to warn them of a Danger, which my Care for their Safety may perhaps make me look upon to be nearer than really it is: One Thing I am very sure of, that Caution can never be detrimental to them; I hope, therefore, they will applaud my Intention, what Faults soever they may find in the Manner in which I have executed it.

I hope I have said nothing, which can possibly give any just Cause of Offence to the Aldermen: I have spoken my Sentiments with a Freedom which becomes a Citizen of *London*; and if they have no Views which tend to the aggrandizing their own Jurisdiction, to the Prejudice of that of the Commons, I am content they should laugh at my honest,

nest, tho' perhaps mistaken, Zeal: But if they, or any of them, have such unjust Designs, I am equally content they should discharge, on this my well-intended tho' ill-executed Effay, the utmost Indignation, detected Ambition can be capable of.

To conclude, I can and do solemnly declare, I have written this Tract with an honest Intention; and I will add, that altho' I had the Honour of being myself an Alderman, I should not have wrote in another Manner; for, as I am an utter Enemy to exorbitant Power in others, I am far from coveting it myself; and whatever Charms *some People* may find in it, I have always considered Power as a dangerous and painful Preheminence.

**F I N I S.**



**ERRATUM.** p. i. l. 5. *read exert.*